

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00 p.m., Monday, September 12, 2011
Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Newberg, OR

“Mission Statement: To give the citizens of Newberg a forum to voice traffic safety concerns, evaluate related issues, provide a liaison with the City and promote traffic safety within the community.”

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Lesley Woodruff called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

ROLL CALL

Members

Present: Lesley Woodruff, V. Chair Doris Brandt Dianna Cotter Ron Johns
Ronald Sult

Members

Absent: Neal Klein (excused) Karl Birky (excused) James Oravetz (excused)
Shannon Eoff (excused) Student Commissioner (VACANT)

Staff

Present: Brian Casey, Police Chief Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer
Jennifer Nelson, Minutes Recorder

Ex Officio

Present: Mayor Bob Andrews

Others

Present: Bill Burnett, Craig Ewing, and Miriam Ewing

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) Review and approve minutes of August 8, 2011

MOTION #1: Sult/Brandt to approve the Traffic Safety Commission Minutes for August 8, 2011, as corrected. (5 Yes/0 No/4 Absent [Klein, Birky, Eoff, Oravetz]) Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A) TSC-11-025: Foothills at N. College _Through Traffic & Parking Issue
TIME – 7:05 PM

Mr. Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer, presented the staff report using a PowerPoint slideshow (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mr. Bill Burnett was present in the audience and asked if he would like to add anything to the report; he replied no further comment was needed.

MOTION #2: Brandt/Cotter to approve **TSC-11-025** by painting a yellow curb on E. Foothills Drive before N. College Street on the north and south sides, starting twenty-five (25) feet west of the existing stop sign and going east; and yellow curb painting will also be mirrored on the north side.

Mayor Andrews asked if there had been any comments from postal services about the potential of blocking vehicular delivery since they are not on foot in that area any longer. Mr. Chiu replied he had not been in contact with the post office and had not heard from them, but it should allow them to pull a vehicle in there and pull out again since the steering wheel is on the opposite side, unless they want to deliver on both sides in one direction; he offered to present something to the postmaster to make them aware of this. Staff also reminded them this would be a limited decision with noticing and further consideration can occur if there are objections.

VOTE #2: To approve **TSC-11-025**. (5 Yes/0 No/4 Absent [Klein, Birky, Eoff, Oravetz]) Motion carried.

Vice-Chair Woodruff asked staff when this decision would be carried out. Staff replied there would be a two week waiting period after notification are send out and then it could be sometime toward the end of this month or early October if no objections are received.

OLD BUSINESS

A) TSC 11-009A: Emma-Creekside _ Stop Sign Request
TIME – 7:23 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report using a PowerPoint slideshow (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mr. Craig Ewing thanked the TSC and spoke of the painted lines helping somewhat when coming down Emma Lane and witnessing a lot of close calls there. He said the interesting thing about this recent accident is that several drivers do exactly what caused the accident. Since letters went out the last time, he noticed people stopped more regularly though. He spoke further about the situation that created the accident with the driver making a wide left turn and how this was the type of thing he was observing when he first came to the TSC about this. He said his concerns were not with the cars as much as they were with the safety of the children there.

Commissioner Ron Johns stated it seemed like the accident was caused by driver error and there is no way he should be hitting the car on the right side. He added he is not sure what help a stop sign would be in that corner and did not think this was the answer, especially with the addition of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) approved ramp, then a driveway, and a tree. He did not think is would be a safe place to put a sign so far back.

Mr. Ewing replied the sign should be put on Emma Lane and Creekside both because of the drivers on Emma Lane having the right of way even if it is several feet back. He noted there were several signs along College Street the same distance back from the road.

Mayor Andrews stated he concurs with what heard in the testimony and they could move the sign north, but also suggested having a stop bar on the pavement. He pointed out this had been done before on Springbrook Road and Vittoria Way so it could be done. He asked staff if there were clearer lane markings if determining who violated the lane would be easier and if this could be a consideration with yield signs rather than stop signs.

Vice-Chair Woodruff felt the yield sign would have the same issue of placement as the stop sign and too far back to be effective.

Ms. Miriam Ewing suggested whether there were yield signs or stop signs, there should also be yellow painting along the curb to prevent cars from parking there, which creates little room for through traffic to see what is going on.

Mr. Chiu replied when stop signs are installed vehicles would not be allowed to park there by default within a certain distance to the sign, the painting would only be necessary if there was a desire to highlight existing regulations; he suggested not having the painting in this situation. The yield signs would also give an indication of who has the right of way to that intersection and a vehicle on Emma Lane waiting to go west, crossing Creekside would have the right of way; without a yield or stop sign in a T-intersection the true left has the right of way. Police Chief Brian Casey concurred with this statement. Mr. Chiu said it is a bad practice of drivers who are not following that practice already and wondered if this type of thing can be prevented other than education. He said he can see the argument for both directions.

Mayor Andrews asked if the lane highlighting with double yellow lines on Creekside would help. Mr. Chiu did not believe it would because there have been a lot of situations with yellow markings and black tire markings right along side of them, indicating people are still making close turns even with lane painting.

Commissioner Dianna Cotter wondered if the painted lane markings on both roads would have any effect and reiterated no action was previously taken because of the potential loss of a tree and the lack of neighborhood support. She thought this could be an inexpensive way to redirect traffic without the loss of the tree and it may give police the ability to measure which driver is in the wrong; she felt this is a possible alternative solution.

Mrs. Ewing said she liked the idea but would prefer it in conjunction with a stop sign because street markings get worn out. She said it would be better to make people stop when coming down Creekside to be on the right side of the road before making the turn and eliminate a lot of the problem. She spoke of pedestrians and children playing there and it being a scary situation there without clear markings and a sign. She said the cars parked there make it difficult for traffic to move and they are in the middle of the road to avoid hitting parked cars.

Commissioner Cotter wondered if this is more issues of drivers not following the rules of road and asked the Police Chief if those using the road will even pay attention to this action. Chief Casey replied it is hard to say based on the number of vehicles travelling if any striping would help determine fault or if it would prevent accidents because they have not had any accidents there prior to this. Commissioner Cotter wondered about the history of painting lines without signs and how it effects how drivers use the road.

Mr. Ewing provided additional comments about the tree pulling up the curb and causing damage to the sidewalk; he said the tree would probably need to be removed anyway. He also added in the development next to them there are already five stop signs and it seems like they should have one too.

Vice-Chair Woodruff replied stop signs do not prevent crashes and it is hard to know if they would have stopped the one that occurred here. This intersection has a low crash history and decisions need to be made based on the 85th percentile target to warrant a sign.

Mrs. Ewing said she appreciates that comment and not all drivers follow the rules, but only a stop sign would cause people to stop and look both directions to avoid conflicts they cannot see when driving faster.

Mr. Ewing added a stop sign has precedence over a tree.

Commissioner Johns stated he did not think putting a stop sign in there is safe because it is too far from curb with the other driveway. He agreed people should be slowing down when they see the fence slow down, but they cannot regulate others' driving.

Vice-Chair Woodruff said painted lines may serve as the most effective solution because the stop sign is not going to work.

Commissioner Johns said he would like staff to look into this further considering the tight corner; he would like the dimensions to be measured and evaluated to see if it makes sense to put paint lines. Staff agreed further analysis would be needed and also pointed out the need to refresh pavement markings over time and diminished visibility when the pavement is wet, so this solution may be weather dependent.

Vice-Chair Woodruff directed staff to spend time this month preparing for the next meeting to find out if line painting could work and how it would be done.

Mrs. Ewing asked if they are looking at the possibility of painting lines, are they going to be considering a stop sign as well.

Vice-Chair Woodruff said they have considered the stop sign already and it was not approved, but appealed.

Commissioner Cotter stated she did not believe it has been ruled out, but it was already decided not to install a sign and they are trying to find another solution.

B) TAC 11-023: 11th Street at Scott Leavitt Park _ Speed Zone Request
TIME – 8:16 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report using a PowerPoint slideshow and reviewed the posted speed signs in the City park areas of Newberg (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mayor Andrews asked about statutory language regarding parks and why this was changed to 15 mph. Staff stated they could not find this language regarding parks and his research did not provide a reason for the change either.

Commissioner Doris Brandt asked who requested this change, stating it has been like this for as long as she has been on this commission.

Vice-Chair Woodruff explained she brought the issue to the TSC, not to ask for change, but to consider why the speed limit was so low there and if it should be changed to be consistent and as a courtesy to drivers. She had no problems leaving it the way it is.

Commissioner Brandt stated no action should be taken.

Vice-Chair recessed at 8:26 PM and reconvened at 8:34 PM.

C) TSC-11-021: Hwy 99W at Drive-in Theater
TIME – 8:34 PM

Chief Casey gave a brief background on the issue of car lining up and parking on the side of the roads and Hwy 99W while waiting to get into the 99W Drive-In Theater and there has still be no resolution although they have been meeting with the owners. Since the season is ending, they are hoping to have a solution by next season.

STAFF REPORTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

A) Police Update

Mr. Brian Casey, Police Chief, reported there has been a lot of emphasis in the school areas with the new school year starting to keep parents, busses, and kids safe. There have been no major issues and things are going really well early in the year. Additionally crime statistics indicate a 5% drop in the crime rate in the first seven months of 2011 compared to the first seven months of 2010.

B) Engineering Update

Mr. Chiu gave updates on the Crestview Drive project near the Oxberg Estates neighborhood and anticipates paving to occur at the end of this month or early October for the sound wall and sidewalk.

Mayor Andrews asked for an update on pedestrian crossing on the railroad tracks from Meridian Street. Staff said they will be working with the railroad company and trying to schedule an appointment, but staff phone calls are not being returned.

Mr. Chiu also gave updates on the educational/memorial sign placement on the flashing pedestrian sign and spoke of material provided by the city attorney regarding the final code changes for this commission.

C) Items from Commissioners

Commissioner Ron Sult asked about painted lines that were supposed to be at Mabel Rush Elementary. Staff was asked to follow up on the no parking zones established there and if that was a part of the "Safe Routes to School" program.


Vice-Chair Woodruff reminded the commissioners to visit each site in person and not rely on the pictures provided by staff only. She also stated members can still come to the City Council meeting regarding the changes to the ordinance if they like.

Mayor Andrews added it will be coming back to Council in October since changes were made and he had a change of heart about whether the Library Board's process was something they really wanted to follow in terms of interviewing and appointing commission members. He also noted there were changes to the student commissioner term dates to assist with recruiting.

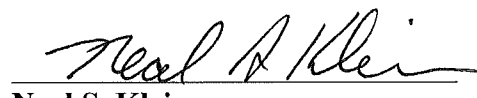
ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM until October 10, 2011.

Approved by the Newberg Traffic Safety Commission this 10th day of October, 2011.



Jennifer L. Nelson
Minutes Recorder



Neal S. Klein
Traffic Safety Commission Chair